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YACHTING.

A YACHTSMAN, like a poet, must be born with a leaning towards his vocation: he must have an inherent love of salt water, and be destitute of that hydrophobia—which, by the way, rabid animals do not possess—which prompts one to avoid water as much as possible, and makes him think he would much rather walk the dry land, 'like a thing of life,' with a dry jacket and an appetite for his dinner, than walk the waters like a half-dead-and-alive creature, with a reeling brain and nauseated stomach.

If a 'wet sheet' be synonymous in his mind with a wet blanket—if he be scrupulous about contaminating his hands with tar and grease—if he require punctual meals and undisturbed nights' rest—if he be of precise habits and formal notions, let him stay on shore; he will never make a yachtsman.

Except for a short sail on a very fine day, we would give the same advice to our lady-readers. Ashore, they are truly, as the Persian poet sings, 'the roses in the flower-garden of our existence;' but transplanted to the deck of a yacht, they become briars and thistles, alike useless, inconvenient, and unsightly. If a lady get a fall from her horse, or tumble into a pond, or sink in a swoon from fright, or any other cause, or no cause at all, there may be some romance in rescuing and consoling her, though her garments be smeared with mud or covered with dust, and her hair disordered; but sentiment and sea-sickness cannot possibly exist together. The most devoted admirer will never sympathise with, seldom even pity, your sufferings. If he be well himself, he will chuckle internally at the proud consciousness of his immunity from such a misfortune; and if he also be ill, his own peculiar misery is too absorbing to admit of any compassion for others.

To all such persons a yacht is anything but a pleasure-boat; but if a man has a real taste for amateur seamanship, and also time, opportunity, and, above all, sufficient means for the purpose, there cannot be a more enjoyable, fascinating pursuit.

As sociability was found considerably to increase the interest in this amusement, various associations, styling themselves Royal Yacht Clubs, were formed in various parts of the United Kingdom, of which the names and stations are as follows:—Royal Squadron, Cowes; Royal Cork, Cork; Royal Dee, Chester; Royal Eastern, Edinburgh; Royal Harwich, Harwich; Royal Irish, Kingstown; Royal Mersey, Liverpool; Royal Northern, Firth of Clyde; Royal Southern, Southampton; Royal St George's, Kingstown; Royal Thames, London; Royal Victoria, Ryde; Royal Welsh, Carnarvon; Royal Western of England, Plymouth;

Royal Western of Ireland, Valentia; Royal Yorkshire, Hull and Whitby; Royal London, Thames; Prince of Wales, Thames.

Each of these clubs has its own admiral and vice-admiral, or commodore and vice-commodore, committee and secretary, its own flags, which being issued by special Admiralty warrant, entitle vessels sailing under them to certain privileges, such as exemption from harbour-dues, &c., not only in home, but foreign ports. They have also their distinct case of rules and sailing-regulations. The difference in the latter is often productive of confusion, particularly that for the measurement of tonnage, the method for finding which varies so much, that the difference of several tons is often the result.

It would seem to the uninitiated an easy matter to determine the exact measurement of any vessel, but this is far from being the case. The best method in vogue does not pretend to do more than closely approximate to the correct capacity; and this difficulty is considerably increased by the common practice of purposely building yachts to evade these rules and measure less than their real tonnage, which can be done in several ways, interesting only to those who are conversant with such matters.

This is not considered to be taking an improper advantage, as in love, war, and yacht-sailing, everything is considered fair. There is, perhaps, as much jockeying in boat-racing as in horse-racing; and though the sailing-regulations are apparently most stringent, yet means may be found of evading the spirit of many of them, without actually infringing the letter. The proper trim and handling of any craft are even more necessary to insure victory than the seat and touch of the jockey. The celebrated schooner *America*, when she first came over, was supposed to owe her speed entirely to the formation of her hull and cut of her sails. Dozens of yachts were built on her lines—all of them failures too—sails were cut to stand like hers; but as soon as she passed into another's hands, it was found that, like the wonderful lamp, all her virtues consisted in the knowledge of the owner how to bring them into play.

Local knowledge of the coast and harbours is nearly as useful in racing as smart seamanship; and though a right line is unquestionably the shortest distance between two points, yet the skilful pilot well knows that if, by diverging considerably from the direct course, he can avoid an opposing tide, or avail himself of a favourable current, he will arrive at the goal long before those who pursue the straight course all through. All the principal regattas are now held under the patronage and direction of some yacht-club

in their vicinity; and in consequence, the prizes are larger and the attendance more respectable than it could be otherwise.

This has induced great competition, and consequent improvements, in yacht-building; so much so, that the greatest clippers find themselves, as it is termed, 'built out' in the course of a couple of seasons; that is to say, some newer rival starts up, which triumphantly defeats them, and maintains her post of pre-eminence in every match, until she is in turn outsailed by another.

There is no doubt, however, that comfort and seaworthiness have, in consequence of this competition, been sacrificed to speed. It is impossible for fair sea-going boats to carry the spars and canvas used in racing; and many of the yachts which are carrying off prizes this season are mere shells, without cabin-fittings or internal accommodations of any kind, as it is found that bulkheads, or anything which lessens the elasticity of a vessel's sides, diminishes her speed.

With one exception, all these clubs are of recent date—nearly all of them having sprung up within the last twenty years. The exception is the Royal Cork Yacht-club, which dates back to 1720, and is doubtless the oldest society of the kind in the world. Its antiquity is confirmed by the manner in which it is spoken of in a work, entitled *A Tour through Ireland by two English Gentlemen* (London, printed for J. Roberts, in Warwick Lane, 1748). 'I shall now acquaint your lordships with a ceremony they have at Cork. It is somewhat like that of the doge of Venice's wedding the sea. A set of worthy gentlemen, who have formed themselves into a body, which they call the *Water-club*, proceed a few leagues out to sea once a year, in a number of little vessels which, for painting and gilding, exceed the king's yacht at Greenwich and Deptford. Their admiral, who is elected annually, and hoists his flag on board his little vessel, leads the van, and receives the honours of the flag. The rest of the fleet fall in their proper stations, and keep their line in the same manner as the king's ships. This fleet is attended with a prodigious number of boats, which, with their colours flying, drums beating, and trumpets sounding, forms one of the most agreeable and splendid sights your lordships can conceive.'

The old rules, as they existed in 1720, are still extant, and some of them are so characteristic of the good old times as to be worth transcribing.

Rule No. 2 directs, 'that no admiral do bring more than two dishes of meat for the entertainment of the club.' The apparent moderation of this 'poor half-penny worth of bread' is rather put out of countenance by the 'intolerable deal of sack' which follows, as it appears by No. 3, that it was 'resolved that no admiral presume to bring more than two dozen of wine to his treat, for it has always been deemed a breach of the ancient rules and constitutions of the club, except when my lords the judges are invited.' Rather a doubtful compliment to their lordships; but it proves there must have been good heads on the bench in those days. After such copious libations, we cannot but commend the prudence of No. 16, which directs that 'all business of the club be done before dinner, except appointing the time of the next meeting, or presenting, mulcting, or levying fines.' No. 9 orders 'that no long-tail wigs, large sleeves, or ruffles, be worn by any member at the club.' No. 14 says, 'that such members of the club, or others, as shall talk of sailing after dinner, be fined a bumper.' We

wonder how often this rule was infringed, both unwittingly and of malice aforethought, and how willingly did the culprit pay the penalty. It would seem, however, that as time wore on, and it ceased to be a necessary qualification for a gentleman to be able to carry himself discreetly with half-a-dozen bottles under his belt, the good old Irish gentlemen resolved to conform to the custom of the times, and stint themselves in their liquor, for we find an edict added, dated the 21st of April 1737: 'Ordered, that for the future, unless the number of the company exceed fifteen, no man be allowed more than one bottle to his share, and a peremptory.' What is meant by a 'peremptory' does not transpire; but it probably was meant to express an unknown quantity, varying according to circumstances, with the inclination and capability of the individual—like the Scotch bittock, which means any distance from half a mile to five.

A list of members, commencing with Lord Inchiquin, is appended, and a list of sailing-directions, which are quaint enough in their way, but would hardly pass muster in these degenerate days. Some of them, however, are worthy of being retained, particularly that one which provides for the unpleasant but common contingency contemplated in the regulation beginning: 'If a captain has any body very sick on board him,' &c.

Persons accustomed only to large vessels are often surprised that so few accidents occur to pleasure-boats; besides which, the real tars are apt to look down on yachtsmen's seamanship, and regard them as a kind of naval militia. Perhaps in yachting, as in many of the graver positions in life, much pleasure would be marred by a knowledge of our present insecurity and impending danger. As the old quartermaster of the flag-ship used pithily to express it, when he saw a small-craft carrying too much canvas: 'There they goes a carryin' on; they fears nothin', because they knows nothin'.'

Yacht-clubs are not confined to the United Kingdom, but are scattered over various parts of the world—at St Petersburg, Antwerp, and Rotterdam, westwards to New York, and eastwards to Bombay. The last-named harbour is admirably adapted for yachting. For six months in the year, a fine steady sea-breeze prevails all day from eleven A.M., which seldom, as long as daylight lasts, subsides into a calm, or rises to a gale. The wide expanse of water gives a scope and variety which can seldom be found elsewhere; the shores are picturesque and varied; numerous islands, wooded to the water's edge, are scattered over its surface; and on these, within a few miles of the hum of commerce and centre of eastern civilisation, may be found the original jungle, uncultivated and silent as it has been for countless ages past; perhaps more silent, for in one of these islands is the eighth humbug of the world, the far-famed Caves of Elephanta, as the English call them, though their real name is Garipoor. They are curious, certainly, from their remote antiquity—too remote to be correctly ascertained, but hardly repay the toil of the long ascent, under a burning sun, of the steep, uneven path which leads from the landing-place to the top of the hill where the caves are situated. The view from the summit is better worth seeing than the Cavés; not only of the fine sheet of water which forms the harbour, but the innumerable variety of European and native craft. Some of the latter look most picturesque in the distance. When running before the wind, they boom out a lateen-sail on either side, and the yards pointing upwards in opposite directions, appear exactly like the pinions of a sea-bird resting on the water, and just preparing for flight; but when they approach nearer, you perceive that the hull, built on the lines of Noah's Ark, is clumsily made, and ill put together; the scanty rigging composed of different kinds of ropes knotted together; one mast bends gracefully forward, whilst the other is tumbling back towards the stern; the rudder and other appliances

are of the most primitive description, and there is more than one 'Kinsale reef' * in the canvas.

Yacht-races frequently take place under the auspices of the Bombay Club; the manner of conducting which, and the vessels that run in them, are quite the opposite of our European customs and ideas.

At regattas in this country, all yachts start together, the time for difference of tonnage being allowed according to a fixed scale, on their arrival at the winning flag-boat. Schooners are given more in proportion than cutters, in consequence of the disadvantage they labour under when beating to windward.

At Bombay, the time allowed is given at starting, the one receiving most time starting first, and the others in succession after her, when the prescribed interval has elapsed. In arranging this time, the stewards do not pay so much attention to the size, as to the rig and reputation for speed of the different yachts. Some of these are of the description called Bombay fishing-boats, and are so fast that no cutter or schooner can compete with them without receiving long odds: one of them has been known to give a schooner several tons larger than herself an hour's start, and beat her well. It is surprising that boats of this kind have never been introduced into England, as they are probably the fastest in the world in moderate weather and a fair wind. Their great drawback is that, in turning to windward, they are obliged to wear instead of tack—that is to say, go round with their stern towards the wind. In doing this, there is not only the loss of time in describing two-thirds of a circle, instead of one-third, but also the disadvantage of going bodily away to leeward. In tacking, every vessel 'fore-reaches' more or less—that is to say, when thrown up in the wind, her impetus carries her some distance in the right direction. In wearing, the reverse of this is the case.

The Bombay fishing-boats carry one very small mast and one very large lateen-sail. The short mast is stepped far forward, with a slight rake towards the bows—on this is hoisted an enormous lateen-sail. Some idea of their spread of canvas may be formed when it is stated that a boat of eighteen tons often carries a yard eighty feet long. The formation of the hull varies considerably from our European ideas of speed and symmetry; but the chief peculiarity is, that they draw considerably more water forward than aft; whereas all sailing-vessels, of every rig, in this country are precisely the reverse of this, being deeper aft than forward. It is quite evident to any one who has ever seen the model of a Bombay fishing-boat, that if they are right, we must be wrong.

Brother Jonathan has already somewhat opened the eyes of our yachtsmen to the fact that they have still a great deal to learn, and given them a lesson which they do not appear to have forgotten as yet—at least, no one has accepted the fair and manly challenge given by the owner of the *America*. It was to the effect, that having come over and defeated English yachtsmen on their own ground, he would consider himself master of the field until some of them came over to New York and did the same by him; when he would not only endeavour to shew them good sport, but also to return some of the hospitality and kindness he had received from them.

The 'log of the *Pet*' is a curious and interesting record of what a small-craft of only eight tons can accomplish in skilful hands. Previous to Mr Hughes' cruises in the Baltic, most persons would have considered such a project chimerical, and its results certain to be disastrous; and even now, though its having been twice successfully accomplished places its possibility beyond a doubt, yet the repetition of such a fact can

hardly be considered safe or prudent. Setting safety aside, there can be no comfort at sea, being in a cabin where there is not room to swing a cat. To be sure, the owner might say with Master Richard, that as he was never likely to have occasion to resort to so inhuman a practice, that was of no consequence to him.

THE LIFE-ASSURANCE COMPANIES OF THE LAST TWELVE YEARS.

SOME idea may now be formed regarding the success of the many life-offices started in consequence of the act 7th and 8th Victoria, cap. 110 (*anno* 1844), returns having been made to the House of Commons of the accounts of a large proportion of these concerns. From an instructive analysis of these accounts, published by Mr Robert Christie of Edinburgh,* the public may obtain a ready and serviceable light on the subject; and we know few on which it imports them more to be well informed.

It must be generally known that, previous to 1844, there were comparatively few life-assurance offices in the United Kingdom, and that these were mostly of old standing, extensive business, and large means. To add in a few years as many as 131 new offices to the comparatively small number previously existing, was a proceeding about the prudence of which doubts might reasonably be entertained, seeing that each new concern must necessarily have large expenses in proportion to the business done; while if the same business could have been as well done by the old offices, all new expense whatever was just so much money thrown away. The positive results shew that the doubts on this subject were well founded. We find that generally the business effected by the new offices has been small in amount, while the expenses are in proportion great. Thus, for example, we have one office receiving in all of premiums L.86,592, and disbursing L.35,165 in expenses. Another has L.11,394 of premiums, and L.10,262 of expenses. A third has L.20,054 of premiums, and L.25,539 of expenses! The two relative sums are in other cases L.22,630 and L.14,396; L.25,867 and L.22,637; L.4026 and L.6304; L.24,891 and L.24,080. One office, which has been particularly demonstrative about its success, shews of business L.13,711, and of expenses L.32,349, or about 2 to 5. Another, of the same character, exhibits L.12,981 of business, and L.11,539 of expenses. In eighteen offices, chiefly of recent origin, the aggregate premiums received have been L.69,748, or about as much as one good old office will receive in a quarter of a year; while the expenses have been L.86,548, or L.17,000 more than the premiums. Some allowance ought here to be made for the newness of things; but take thirty-four of the oldest of the set, and what do we find? Against L.1,466,398 of premiums, L.801,377 of expenses!

We are here dealing with fifty-two offices which have registered their accounts. There are other sixteen of those registered, whose accounts being either defective or indistinct, do not appear in the analysis referred to, and there are sixty-five which have failed to register, without any reason being given. Generally, we may well believe, these last are not likely to be more flourishing than the others.

Now, let it be considered what an extent of obligation is implied in the words 'premiums received.' We estimate that in the fifty-two offices which have registered their accounts, there are policies standing to the amount of not less than sixteen millions. What a gulf

* A term used by Kinsale hockermen to express a large hole in the mainsail.

* Thomas Constable & Co., Edinburgh; Hamilton, Adams, & Co., London.

is here to be filled up before any prosperity can be attained! Is one in six of these concerns likely to struggle through its early difficulties? What, in a great number of instances, are the prospects of payment for the parties who have invested their savings in these offices?

The whole affair points to a great defect in the political economy received and acted upon by the public. Because good effects are seen to arise from competition in some matters, it is hastily assumed that competition is a healthy and serviceable thing in all. The truth is, there are many things in which competition only speaks of unnecessary expense—injudicious application of labour and capital. The supply of water and gas, the railway service, life-assurance, and assurance in general, are of this nature. If the million and a half of premiums received by the fifty-two new offices had been distributed over the old ones, the public would have been as well served in all conceivable respects, there would have been perfect certainty of all obligations being fulfilled, and the expense of the business would have probably been, as we believe it generally is, under ten per cent.

Experience and proved results now entitle us, we think, to say more emphatically than ever, let no life-policy be taken out in any office of date subsequent to 1844. While those old, solid, well-known concerns, the Globe, Sun, Equitable, Rock, and many others, in England, and the Widows' Fund, Scottish Equitable, Scottish Provident, Standard, and others, in Scotland—in which country there has never yet been one unsound establishment for life-assurance—offer such benefits along with perfect security, it is little less than madness to embark money with any of the fry of the last few years. The public should be only too happy to think that there are offices which have, through age, attained perfect solidity, and by large business come to the minimum of relative expenses. To pass over these, and take up with new establishments, is voluntarily and wantonly to forego a great advantage. He who goes into a newly plastered house when he can get a seasoned one, who munches hard gooseberries when he can get ripe apricots, who reverses the whole philosophy of the oaths of Highgate, affords but a faint type of such folly.

THE OVERWROUGHT MILLINER QUESTION FROM A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW.

NEARLY fifteen years have passed away since I hailed with as much enthusiasm as the exhaustion of muscular and nervous energy permitted, the first movement of the influential association formed for the benevolent purpose of alleviating, by the agency of public opinion, the 'oppressed condition of milliners' and dressmakers' assistants.' My sense of the evils which that association proposed, and proposes to remedy, is as keen now as then; but the hopeful enthusiasm is, I regret to say, utterly gone—quenched by the stern teachings of those years beyond the power of the most glittering phrases to re-illumine. With the general sayings and doings of the busy and brilliant world by which my own narrow circle of life is circumscribed and controlled, I, partly from temperament, partly from self-distrust, concern myself but little. Its eloquent splendour, I have found, dazzles and blinds, rather than instructs or enlightens me, confusing, as I am apt to do, the excellence of the arguments with the grace and dignity of the orator; but in this question of milliners and dressmakers, I defy diction, however brilliant and imposing; and so entirely, that whilst yet the cheers of Exeter Hall, on the evening of the 11th

of July last, were ringing in my ears, I had mentally reduced to its true value the sonorous dictum of the Right Reverend Bishop of Oxford—that it was for flower-shows, balls, and other entertainments; it was for the gay dancing of painted butterflies in the summer sun; it was for such things as those, that their sisters and daughters were to be offered up at the shrine of this modern Moloch in the valley of abominations.' Few fine things—and fine things I have noticed to have a general tendency that way—could be more erroneous or misleading than those eloquent words—as erroneous and misleading as the excellent prelate's concluding and common-place remark—that the identity of the interests of the employer and employed, is a great eternal truth—was pertinent and just. How it has happened that I, one of the bishop's hypothetical sisters and daughters, and without any figure of speech, an oppressed milliner, have become so firmly settled in adverse opinion to his lordship's, as to resist his impulsive flights into the regions of the unreal—especially in reference to the influence upon our means of life and wellbeing of flower-shows, balls, and the gay dancing of painted butterflies in the summer's sun—I propose to shew by a brief outline of my own very prosaic, very ordinary experience; but first let me disclaim any thought of disparaging the motives of the distinguished persons who, with ardent, if somewhat fitful and capricious zeal, from time to time swoop down from their lofty heights into the abysses of woful working-life, and select with admirable judgment the most effective illustrations wherewith to excite the sympathy of crowded audiences. Far from me be such rebellious—and futile as rebellious—folly, sitting as they do so high above the range of my feeble pen points; and if a tinge of bitterness shall be found to colour unjustly the few words I have to say, let it be imputed to the infirmity of the writer, who having once in her life permitted herself to be mocked and led astray by illusive platform promises, is hardly capable of distinguishing between the pure motives and the poor performances of the well-meaning persons by whose eloquent breath those brilliant bubbles were generated. Just now, the partial success of the admirable early-closing movement—which a police act, had one been obtainable, would have achieved—appears to have confirmed them in their original misapprehension of the true remedy for the evils they so happily illustrate; and what, permit me to ask, but continuance in error can be predicated of an association whose most dignified orator denounces the best friends—the most potent patrons of milliners' and dressmakers' assistants as their worst foes? But for the gay butterflies dancing in the sun, let me, with all humility, assure the Bishop of Oxford, hundreds, ay, thousands of his suffering 'sisters and daughters' would be offered up at the shrine of a Moloch, ancient it is true, and horrible as ancient, in a valley of abominations compared with which, hot, stifling work-rooms, late hours, scant fare, and the premature yielding up of unstained life, were blessings priceless. Not the less is incessant, exhausting female drudgery a giant evil requiring swift remedy, if remedy there be in the legislative or social pharmacopoeia of nations. That there is such remedy, a slowly, silently operating, but sure one, I firmly believe—yet more firmly that it will not be found amongst the prescriptions of legislative or social quacksalvers, however amiable and well-intentioned these may be.

Passing from preface and assumption to narrative and fact, I venture to transcribe a few passages from my own humble, but, as I believe, instructive experience, interweaving therewith, partly by way of relief to the else prosy details, the story, well known to many persons, of Ellen M.—. That story is, I admit, quite an exceptional one; but it will be found, I think,

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to cast a vivid if incidental light upon some of the obstacles that stand in the way of effectual relief to assistant dressmakers and milliners, as well as to dissipate a very absurd assumption. I do not give, because I have no right to give, the poor girl's surname; indeed, I am not sure that that by which I knew her was the true one. There are veils worn in lowly as in high life, which, if justice requires not their removal, should be held sacred; and I will not attempt to uplift a corner of that with which a much-tried spirit here below, and now, I trust, an angel in heaven, chose to shroud the earlier years of her sad pilgrimage.

I made Ellen's acquaintance in the winter of 1841-2—a dreary, bitter time, as thousands must remember, during which a cry of 'Wo! wo!' arose from the hives of industry throughout the startled land. Everywhere labour was scant, ill-paid, diminishing; whilst the causes of the general distress were discussed, I well remember, with a vehement ignorance which, contemplated by the enlightening experience of subsequent years, appears absolutely ludicrous. The want of sufficiently restrictive protection to native industry was the watchword that seemed to be echoed by the greatest number of dupes, myself included; though how our distress could be caused by the freer importation of silks and ribbons, would, I should think, have puzzled me to answer, except by the mournful admission, that under no amount of paternal legislation could the lot of dressmakers and milliners be other than one of periodical privation. With the voices of the quacks there mingled, though not for a while so loud or numerous, those of thoughtful men, who pointed to the failure of three successive harvests, aggravated by protective legislation, as the true causes of the wide-spread distress; conspicuous, too, amidst the general gloom shone the perennial rays of British benevolence. The eleemosynary doles of the House of Have to the Hut of Want—kindly intended, but ludicrously inadequate help to failing industry—were largely outpoured; and influential associations were rapidly formed, by which it was confidently believed that 'the grinding collision between capital and labour'—this expression I find repeated over and over again in my note-book, shewing that it must have been in very frequent use during that miserable year—would be speedily put an end to by some magical, and because magical, I suppose, not very clearly explained process. Paramount amongst these, to my eagerly watchful eyes, was that for 'ameliorating the oppressed condition of milliners' and dressmakers' assistants.' With what delight did my ear drink in eloquently graphic details of familiar woes, which, coming from noble and right honourable lips, appeared to be so many titles to the compensating thereafter promised to us, and which, thereafter, being apparently so facile of accomplishment, had been, to my mind, most unaccountably delayed! I myself drew up tabular statistics of our work, meal and sleeping hours, average wages, &c., and had the pleasure of reading my answers to the queries addressed to me by the noble members of the Lords' Committee in the large print of a parliamentary Blue-book. I remember, withal, to have been fretfully impatient of reasoning with disputatious dissentients as to the practical mode by which the promised succour was to reach us, forasmuch that, as I may here confess, I had felt from the first an unconquerable distrust of the moral pressure to be exercised upon our employers by the refusal of ladies to order fashionable novelties that, during the busy season, might overtax our powers to supply in time; my secret and cherished hope being that parliament would compel milliner and dressmaking capitalists to give us better wages for less work, as well as more constant and equally-timed employment.

I was rudely shaken out of that pleasant dream by finding myself suddenly discharged in what should

have been the height of the season; but, alas! the claims of charity, the warnings of prudence, and in some degree, if I remember rightly, news of military disaster from India, had eclipsed the gaiety of the *beau-monde*; the painted butterflies ceased to dance in the sun or gas shine; and the fashionable milliner by whom I was employed, and who rented a house in Regent Street at £350 per annum, was compelled, first to reduce, and ultimately, in consequence of an execution for rent, sent in by one of the noblest of the Lords' Committee, to close her establishment.

No case this for the benevolent intervention of gentlemen associated to shorten milliners' and dressmakers' assistants hours of labour!—a sad one, withal; for thirty-five hands were thereby sent adrift into the seething whirlpool of London labour-life; and as the same causes that had shattered our employer's roof-tree, shook threateningly those of others, compelling strictest circumspection, the search for admission into already overcrowded and tottering houses was a hopeless one—at all events, becoming hopeless even to my ever-hopeful self, as days, weeks, months went by, and left me still seeking for employment; and in that wearying quest, ever gravitating further and further eastward, from the comparatively liberal salary of the west-end *artiste*, to the copper-counted wage of the city-warehouse milliner's workwoman. There was, however, no help for it: lips, whether blooming or withered, must still be fed, and I was at length fain to jostle with the crowd of hungry competitors—literally a crowd, the sole qualification being a commonly adroit use of the needle, for the distressful bread which they clamorously disputed with each other!

One of that crowd was Ellen M—, a pale girl of about eighteen summers' growth, upon whose well-turned cheeks there still faintly lingered some sparkles of the light and freshness of her country home—a seaside village, I afterwards knew, in Somersetshire. She would, it immediately struck me, have been more than pretty—approaching to the beautiful, had not some untimely blight, whether of betrayed affection, of sudden poverty, the loss of parents—peradventure of all those griefs combined—checked that beauty in the bud, though not till it had been sufficiently disclosed to shew how bright those dark, deep eyes would be did happiness shine through them—how radiantly lustrous that finely chiseled countenance, if lit up with girlish gaiety and joy. Her figure, too, was charming, though rather *petite*; and there was a natural grace in her movements which seemed to flout, as it were, and render more apparent the meanness of the rusty mourning in which she was scantily clad. This poor child and I became, from companionship in disappointed effort, associated in life and in friendship. The first time I actually saw how wonderfully joy could transfigure her pensive features, was one morning in the late autumn as she was standing, on tiptoe with impatience, in wait for me at the Finsbury end of Sun Street, Bishopsgate. She had found work for both of us in John Street, Clerkenwell, at making artificial fronts of ribbon in imitation of plaited-hair; and poor as the price seemed, I caught at the offer, more eagerly for her sake than my own; for although I was nearly at my last sovereign, she, poor girl, was, I knew, at her last sixpence—a difference of condition, with its antecedent corollaries, under such circumstances, difficult to appreciate by those who only know the relative significance of those coins as trade-counters.

Well, we forthwith rented a back-room in a decent house near the 'front' factory, in which we slept, ate, and worked together; and so much better than we anticipated did our new employment pay, that after the first two or three weeks, we could earn, by rising early and sitting up late, about sixteen shillings between us weekly. This sufficed for our absolute needs. And by and by, after a long and trying interval

of many months, it seemed that the pressure upon the springs of industry was sensibly lessened: there had been, I saw by the newspapers, an abundant harvest; millinery of the common kind began 'to look up,' in city phrase, and Ellen and I were offered more work than we could possibly perform, of course at advancing prices. Another winter, summer, autumn, came and passed; there was again a 'full year;' and but for some secret drain upon her purse, Ellen's savings would have exceeded mine, for she was a much quicker hand than I at the kind of work we were chiefly supplied with. As it fell out, she was ever bare of coin; yet by such an impassable atmosphere of reserve was she encompassed, that I found it impossible to urgently question her upon the evidently painful topic. Several times I had seen her, myself unnoticed, and always as darkness was falling, in hurried conversation with a sometimes showily, sometimes shabbily dressed young man, whose features I could never obtain a distinct view of. As Ellen, after each of those interviews, was terribly excited and disturbed, I concluded in my own mind that the stranger was in some way connected with the absorption of her earnings, and the profound and growing melancholy which weighed down her naturally buoyant spirit. Once I asked her how many 'sweethearts' she had crazed in her time.

'I have loved,' she replied with the strange gravity of tone occasional with her, 'and have been beloved, by one now long since dead. Had he lived, I should not have been here.'

'And have you no male relative?' I ventured to add, fearful, as I always was, of giving her pain—of striking unawares upon some hidden chord of anguish.

'Yes,' she said, 'one—a brother,' adding, as she rose and left the room, 'a sea-faring youth.'

The following year was a generally prosperous one; the London season had recovered its wonted brilliancy, and my services were required at an establishment in New Bond Street. Ellen might have accompanied me, but she preferred accepting an engagement with a city house, where, from peculiar circumstances, she would be able to earn more money than at the West End. I have seldom known a cleverer, more tasteful hand than Ellen; and so decided was her superiority, that she quickly commanded the very highest remuneration that could be afforded, and was, moreover, enabled to *insist* upon being supplied with an amount of piece-work which she could only get through with by sitting up three parts of the night. She was killing herself—that was quite plain, and this in spite of the remonstrances of Mrs Turner, who at length sent for me, with the hope that my influence might prevail with the wilful young woman to moderate her suicidal toil. It will sound strangely to many, that an employer should condescend to persuade a workwoman to abate her exertions, and condescend in vain; but the fact is frequent, nevertheless, and the explanation in this case easy. Mrs Turner's connection lay chiefly with rich, *serious* families; the May-meetings were close at hand, and the consequent pressure upon the establishment was intense, it being undeniable that a serious lady is no more willing to wear an old-fashioned bonnet or a dowdy dress at a crowded religious festival, or even at church, than the gaudiest butterfly that ever fluttered at Almack's would be to do so at a profane ball or flower-show. With several of those families, and Mrs Turner's most profitable patrons, Ellen had soon become a first favourite. They would be waited upon by no one else, and thought no cap or bonnet elegant or becoming that had not passed through her fairy-like, transforming fingers. What, then, could poor Mrs Turner do, beyond quietly remonstrating with the insatiate worker, whose craving after money seemed, in one so young, perfectly astounding, inexplicable? We were thus debating, when Ellen entered the room with a

peremptory 'made-up-my-mind' look and air, which, at sight of me, changed instantly to an expression of surprise and—shame, shall I say? No, not shame—a kind of vexed confusion rather, though her greeting, after a few moments' hesitation, was kindly and cordial as ever.

'The wan, haggard, dying girl!—what madness can possess her to thus sacrifice herself?'—was my mental exclamation as I held her thin, wasted hands in mine, and gazed with a sort of fascination into her eyes, now preternaturally bright with the fire of her consuming life-blood. She comprehended that silent questioning, and in reply said, in a low sad voice: 'There is a cause, Mary. I cannot just yet slacken my exertions; and it would be useless even for you to urge compliance with this good lady's kind admonitions.—Is it agreed,' she quickly added, addressing Mrs Turner with the hectoring manner which sat so strangely upon her, 'that I undertake the whole of the order I received on Saturday from Mrs —?'

'You could not possibly accomplish it,' replied Mrs Turner. 'This is Monday; and on Thursday evening every article must, as you know, be delivered.'

'I can—I will accomplish it, unless you give the work to some one else, in which case I shall at once inform Mrs — that I have transferred my services to over the way; and my reason for doing so.'

The words 'insufferable insolence, ingratitude!' were on my tongue, and would have been spoken but for Ellen's deprecating glance and exclamation: 'There is a cause, I tell you, Mary; and you shall know hereafter why I want a particular sum by Thursday evening.'

'Well—but—'

'Why, I must *earn* a particular sum by Thursday evening at latest,' interrupted the excited girl with flashing, prideful eyes.

It would, I saw, be time thrown away to combat her fixed purpose; and Mrs Turner had no choice but to yield or jeopardise her connection. The manufacturer by machinery may hasten, retard, stop his inanimate machines at pleasure: one shuttle or pin, and I suppose one all but inanimate attendant upon shuttle and pin will answer as well as another: not so where the work depends upon the cultivated taste and skill of the individual worker; especially not so, when, under penalty of ruin, Fashion with its capricious changes must be kept constant, unresting pace with.

On that very Thursday evening, when her self-imposed task was fulfilled, and she held in her hand the money-price of her life, Ellen's strong will gave sudden way: she was seized with violent hysterical and fainting-fits, during which some baffled but imperious purpose made itself inarticulately manifest, so to speak, till my arrival, when my unhappy friend, seizing my arm with a gripe of steel, and pulling my head down close to hers, gasped out: 'The money, Mary—this money: this—take it to 15 Hosier Lane; lose not a moment: my brother waits for it there; he is unworthy; but—still, still, our mother's son!'

Her bidding was performed; and the vile, dissolute brother, whom the delay of a few hours would have consigned to Newgate, and who, by devices familiar to such villains, had despoiled his sister of her hard earnings, embarked the next day for America. Ellen died on the eleventh of the following September, calmly, peacefully as a child that falls asleep from very weariness—a victim, the reverend gentleman who improved her death declared, to the cruel exigencies of her vocation as a milliner's assistant! Untrue, no doubt; but as I have previously remarked poor Ellen's experience was altogether exceptional, and valuable only, with reference to the purpose of this paper, inasmuch that it incidentally gives to view some of the exigencies and difficulties that wait upon the supply of fashionable apparel to saints equally with sinners. And

now to resume briefly and conclude my own particular story.

Restored to my former position, I naturally looked around for some evidence of the labours of the Association and the Lords' Committee; but not a particle thereof could I discern. There was the same influx as formerly of candidates for millinery martyrdom, comprising amongst them, as Lord Shaftesbury very truly remarked at the Exeter-Hall meeting, many 'of gentle birth and superior education, daughters of clergymen, of non-conformist ministers, and half-pay officers;' the same continuous round of wearing labour during the season, the same compulsory idleness for occasional hands when the season had passed, and but for the following instructive occurrence, I should have concluded that these influential agencies had wrought no result whatever.

We were exceedingly busy; no more *capable* hands were to be had, when a note was received from one of the most beautiful and amiable of English countesses, requiring my employer's attendance on the following day to take directions for the wedding trousseau of her ladyship's eldest daughter. I accompanied Mrs — to the stately mansion, and assisted her to receive one of the most costly orders she had ever been favoured with. At last the long and anxious deliberation was at an end; colours, patterns, fashions were decided upon, and we were about to go, when the countess seating herself, with preparation so to speak, in a magnificent fauteuil, commanded, in her graciously majestic way, silence and attention, and being obeyed, though less promptly by her lady-daughters than ourselves, said: 'There is an essential point, Mrs —, upon which, before I finally decide upon giving you this order, we must come to a clear understanding. It is this: Have you, or can you procure a sufficient number of experienced hands to complete the order by the day named, without subjecting them to the killing overwork to which so many unfortunate young persons in your profession have fallen victims?'

I dared not look at poor Mrs —, to whom I knew the countess's order was just then especially opportune, her ladyship being both prompt and liberal in her payments; and I could hardly hear her faint, stammering reply: 'I—I am afraid I do not quite understand your ladyship.'

'I say,' resumed the countess, 'that if the execution of this order will impose extra hours of labour upon your people, I shall feel myself obliged to employ some one else. I shall be obliged by a candid answer to a very plain question,' added her ladyship.

And her ladyship, the moralist will say, had a right to a candid answer. I do not dispute that; but I know that the answer she *did* receive was that which, under the same circumstances, would have been given by ninety-nine out of a hundred, ay, by the entire *centaine* of mistress-milliners in town or country. It was, that 'her ladyship's kindly considerate wishes should be strictly respected;' which assurance satisfied the conscience of the countess, and did not, I think, greatly distress that of my employer. In sooth, her ladyship's suggestion, or command, was an altogether unreasonable one, and could not have been complied with by any establishment at the west end of London. There was, in fact, only one way by which the countess's humane stipulation could have been carried into effect; and that was, by postponing the wedding till the dull season arrived; and I would just ask how, in the reader's opinion, the moral pressure of such a suggestion from Mrs — would have been received?

Supposing, too, that her ladyship had not been so easily satisfied with the evasive assurance she received, could she have sent her confidential waiting-woman every evening to ascertain personally that the millinery people at No. — New Bond Street, after partaking of a light, wholesome supper, were all in bed by half-past

ten; and again in the morning, to be sure they were not set to work before breakfast, and eight o'clock, at earliest? The pressure of enlightened public opinion may close shops, an open one being an undeniable, staring fact; but how it should control the sleeping, working, eating hours of grown-up people, whom an enlightened public cannot see to bed, at work, or at meals, passeth understanding.

The years 1847-8-9, it is essential to add, were years of cruel suffering to milliners' and dressmakers' assistants. In 1850 the pressure abated; and during the two following years we were in a better position in all respects—better able to insist upon fair terms with our employers, than at any time, not in my experience alone, but in that of much older hands. Then the war-cloud overgrew and darkened the glad sunshine—ultimately burst in all its terrors; the glories of Alma and Inkermann robbed the painted butterflies of fashion in dismal crape, and lo! just as we are emerging, with somewhat better hopes of the future, from the half-war, half-peace season of 1855-6, and settling down as we best may for the long, dreary vacation—our worst affliction! Exeter Hall suddenly rouses itself to insist upon shortening our hours of labour! I was about to subjoin Mr Burchell's expressive monosyllable, but it might perhaps be thought vulgar to do so.

The foregoing narrative of familiar facts teaches, it seems to me, that schemes for regulating by moral pressure the hours of labour in so peculiar, fitful, fluctuating an occupation as ours, are and must be delusions—broken cisterns that can hold no water: that in times of dearth we suffer, in years of plenty rejoice with the bulk of the people; and that our particular wellbeing, therefore, can only be effectually promoted by helping forward the general prosperity of the nation. I hold, moreover, that when the great and good Sir Robert Peel, rising above the politics of a party, gave, as far as human legislation can give, abundance to the people, he did more for milliners' and dressmakers' assistants than could be effected by a thousand influential associations in a thousand years; in proof whereof, I point to the Registrar-general's return of the relative number of marriages in years of scarcity and abundance. The old mythology was at fault in not espousing Ceres to Cupid, it being undeniable that cheap bread has an irresistible tendency to convert bachelors into benedicts; and nothing, let me, in all seriousness, assure the reader, could have so effectually relieved the oppressed condition of milliners' and dressmakers' assistants, as did the rapid increase in 1851-2 of the number of marriages. All, in truth, that is wanted is a much larger proportional number of painted butterflies to those who adorn them; a desideratum which, I from experience state, was in rapid course of accomplishment, when war and scarcity intervened, and transferred the task of bettering our condition from Hymen to the Earl of Shaftesbury—a bad exchange! So, at least, with all respect for the virtues of that distinguished nobleman, thinks his Lordship's very humble servant—MARY S—.

[We do not altogether agree with our fair correspondent, if we rightly understand her somewhat wordy argument. The success of what is called the early-closing movement is of itself sufficient proof of the efficacy of moral force in changing the social habits of purchasers and the business rules of employers; and we see no greater difficulty in the case of the milliners' assistants. If the *quasi* humane countess referred to above—who *knew* that the answer she received was false—had simply divided her order among several persons in the trade, or had even given it to the same individual a week or two earlier—for neither marriages nor balls are very sudden matters in that rank—the difficulty would have been surmounted. Milliners' assistants are in the position of skilled labourers; and although they must of course

feel the fluctuations of trade like other work-people, there can be no good reason why, in a civilised country, these should go the length, as a general rule, of destroying their health and shortening their lives.—Ed.]

NEWTON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THE PERSONAL CHARACTER OF NEWTON.

THERE is a very interesting variety of the human race which may be distinctively designated the 'big-brained.' Individuals who belong to this variety, work, not because they have some object to accomplish, but because they cannot help themselves. They are annoyed, rather than otherwise, if asked to take stock, or cast up an account of their gains. Like huge water-wheels, they move slowly and relentlessly, and are never caught flitting about out of their normal beat and pace; you never see them basking on green banks among flowers, or hear them whistling in the sunshine with their hands in their pockets: if they take any kind of recreation, it is in some dream-land, to which other mortals cannot follow them. Ambition exercises no power over them, and wealth is for them devoid of all charm: if you give them money, they put it into a box by an open window, and dispense it by hand-fuls to the first-comers. They make trusty and faithful servants of their senses, and are never capriciously led by their agency. Nevertheless, they are themselves, in the main, the slaves of a very ruthless tyrant, who rules over their lives with despotic sway. Large hemispherical nerve-masses, that dwell just behind their foreheads, drive them unceasingly, and deprive them, for the most part, of the chief privileges of freedom. In short, they are, as it were, *brain-ridden*, and have to follow obediently the path that is indicated by the guiding-rein.

The personal character of Sir Isaac Newton possesses a peculiar attractiveness, apart from all consideration of the substantial benefits the illustrious philosopher has bequeathed to mankind, on account of its furnishing one of the purest exemplifications of humanity in its 'big-brained' phase. The listener never grows weary of hearing about this large-headed sage and his doings. It is delightful to contemplate him losing his dinner in his 'fluxions,' and losing himself in his 'binomial' maze. It is felt to be somewhat hard to have to give up the dog 'Diamond' as a myth, upon the ground that neither purring Puss nor sprightly Poodle was ever allowed within the sacred precincts of the thought-hallowed rooms; but the sacrifice is made with a very good grace, so soon as it is understood that new lights are to be reflected upon the personality of the recluse out of the self-same documents that upset the old story. The third edition of the *Principia* was printed during Sir Isaac Newton's lifetime, under the editorship of the talented young Plumian Professor of Astronomy of the day; and the correspondence that passed between the author and the editor on the occasion was carefully preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, to be only recently disinterred. Other valuable letters have also been of late drawn from various sources, and Sir David Brewster has availed himself of all these in the preparation of a work, entitled *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton*, which, to say the least of it, has the high merit of furnishing many more particulars regarding the philosopher than any sketch that has ever been printed before.

It appears that on Christmas-day 1642, a weak and puny infant was brought prematurely into the world, in a farmhouse within six miles of Grantham, in Lincolnshire. Great alarm was felt at the time for the life of the frail 'Neogilos' by the attendants and friends; but it managed to keep hold of 'the stage,'

upon which it had been thus inauspiciously introduced; and, by dint of crying and sleeping, at length established a claim to have a rôle allotted to it there. At first it did not seem to be altogether clear what the part should be; for its father—who had succeeded to the possession of an estate, worth some trifling forty or fifty pounds a year—only a little more than a year before, had taken to himself a wife with another farm of fifty pounds a year of her own, and had then died, leaving his widow to do the best she could for the offspring that was about to present itself, upon the produce of the two farms.

The estate on which Isaac Newton was born, although of such small absolute value, possessed the dignity of manorial rights; under the designation of Woolsthorpe, it ranked as a dependent hamlet of the village of Colsterworth. Here, for three years, the widow made the best struggle she could; but at the end of that time seems to have been persuaded to accept the addresses and the hand of the clergyman of a neighbouring parish, the Rev. Barnabas Smith, of North Witham. When she left Woolsthorpe for her new abode, the mother of her first husband came to the manor-house, to take charge of its infantile heir. The good old grandmother appears to have been skilled in nurse-craft, for the sickly child, under her judicious management, soon acquired vigour enough to be trusted at the schools of two of the neighbouring villages. In these humble academies, the intellect that was to fathom the great physical mystery of the universe, and that was to stretch forth co-equal with its span, took its first lessons in knowledge and wisdom. Scarcely anything is on record regarding this period of Newton's life. He had not then begun to write his own unconscious memoirs, and no one else, excepting perhaps the fond old grandmother, thought enough about him to have anything to note. Fancy, nevertheless, can supply the deficiency, and see the heavy-browed, 'big-brained' lad sitting listlessly and dreamily, with pale face, broad shoulders, and deep speculative eyes, amidst his companions, wondering at life, whilst they were enjoying it, and calmly abiding his time upon the confines of the vast mathematical Charybdis that was to have him in its whirlpools by and by.

In the next scene of the drama, Isaac Newton appears in a garret of an old house at Grantham. There are rough bold drawings on paper pinned up on the walls; there are antiquated treatises on the mechanical sciences lying in the room; and there are rudely finished working-models of water-mills and other odd contrivances—one intended to measure time by the dripping of water; and another, an embryo sun-dial, that is to be completed by the holidays, and erected at Woolsthorpe. Newton is now fifteen years old, and has been attending the classes of the grammar-school at Grantham for three years. The revenues of Woolsthorpe and of the maternal farm of Sewsterne, have been laid under contribution, the proceeds being probably augmented by the kindness of the incumbent of North Witham, and the scholar lodges in an apartment, in the upper story, of an apothecary of the town.

In the apothecary's garret at Grantham, an apparition of flesh and blood presents itself, amidst the models and drawings. A certain Mistress Storey, a relative of the master of the house, aged twelve years, and with a very pretty face and comely person of her own, haunts the room. The substantial phantom seems, however, to have no terrors for the future philosopher; on the contrary, its presence appears to have communicated a certain degree of fascination to the humble room, even after the models and drawings had ceased to have any legitimate right there, in consequence of the studious tenant having been recalled home from the grammar-school. A year or two subsequently, when Newton came to Grantham from Woolsthorpe, with an old servant, to transact farming-business in

the market-town, he was often found in the old garret, following old pursuits, when he was presumed to be among the farmers in the corn-market, fitting himself for new ones. It would be a curious question, could it be determined, whether the clepsydre and mechanics, or Mistress Storey, exercised the greater influence over the agricultural truant in those young days? However this may have been, there is no doubt which ultimately was the victrix, for the pretty face disappears entirely from the scene. Big-brainedness, when in the highest phase of perfection, tolerates no mistress as a sharer in its reign.

When Newton was fifteen years old, his stepfather, Mr Smith, died, and his mother came home to Wools-thorpe with three children, a half-brother and two half-sisters, and he was recalled at once from Grantham school to manage the farm, and be their companion. After a fair trial, it was, however, discovered that there was very little chance of either bullocks or fields attaining to any improvement of condition through his superintendence; and, in accordance with the judicious advice of a maternal uncle, the boy was sent back to Grantham to complete his preparation for the scholarly life of college.

The year 1661 found Newton matriculated as a sizar at Trinity College, Cambridge, but very little is known of his proceedings at this period. He proved to be already an adept in the principles of logic, and was set to read Kepler's book on optics with a class; but the tutor observed that he had thoroughly mastered the treatise by the time his companions had got fairly launched in the preliminary chapters. Paying a chance visit to Stourbridge fair, he purchased an old work on judicial astronomy; unable, however, to understand this without some acquaintance with the processes of mathematical reasoning, he was led to attack Euclid's treatise on the elements of the science. This seemed to him so tedious, on account of the length of the great geometer's demonstrations, that he managed to devise shorter routes to the conclusions for himself. It is a very curious fact, that the future calculator of the planetary perturbations and the future expositor of the geometry of the heavens, had his attention drawn to mathematics while a student in the university that is now the great focus of mathematical light, by the chance acquisition of an old astrological book.

In 1664, Newton was elected a scholar of Trinity College, and in 1665 took his degree of Bachelor of Arts. It appears that he was now deeply absorbed in devising a means for effecting, by broad comprehensive rules, sundry complex calculations that had hitherto been made only by tedious isolated processes gone through in successive stages. In the summers of 1665 and 1666, the plague visited the banks of the Cam, and the students were all dismissed from the colleges in consequence. The scholar of Trinity went home to Woolsthorpe, and pondered his fluxions under the shadow of his paternal trees. According to tradition, it was during one of these summers, and amidst these shadows, that 'gravitation' fell into his apprehension, as an apple fell to the earth from over his head.

These several particulars have been ascertained only by gathering them carefully from a diversity of sources. In the year 1682, however, the curtain is again fairly drawn up, and the person of the sage is once more before the eye: he is now a Master of Arts, the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, and has been fifteen years a fellow of his college; he dwells in collegiate apartments, just to the north of the great gateway of the college, and has a small piece of garden between his rooms and the outer boundary-wall, in which a small building has been erected to serve as a chemical laboratory; he is forty years old, but his hair is prematurely gray; he has sent up the first reflecting-telescope ever made to the Royal Society, because he has been pressed by friends to do so,

remarking at the same time, 'had the communication not been desired, I might have still let it remain in private, as it hath already done several years;' he has been admitted into the Royal Society with open arms on the part of the fellows, and has communicated to them 'the oddest detection hitherto made in the operations of nature,' which oddest detection proved to be the unequal bending capacities of different coloured lights, when passed through transparent media. A royal patent has been issued to dispense with the necessity of his taking holy orders while holding his mathematical professorship, and he has contributed sundry valuable communications to the Philosophical Transactions, but always under the persuasion of friends, and with the stipulation that his name is not to appear, for 'he sees not what there is desirable in public esteem, were he able to acquire and maintain it. It would perhaps increase his acquaintance, which he chiefly studies to decline.' Notwithstanding these big-brained idiosyncrasies and instincts, he nevertheless has had to submit to the fate which the world keeps in reserve for its sages; he has been dragged into controversy in spite of himself; and a weary experience he must have had of it, if his own words may be received, for he writes in one of his letters: 'Mr Leibnitz endeavoured to engage me, against my will, in new disputes about occult qualities, universal gravity, the sensorium of God, space, time, vacuum, atoms, the perfection of the world, supra-mundane intelligence, and mathematical problems!' Well, indeed, might the big-brained philosopher, smarting under his dire experience, regret that he had ever allowed the ungracious world to trespass within his calm domains, even by an eye-glance; and well might he write in another place: 'I see a man must either resolve to put out nothing new, or become a slave to defend it. . . . I was so persecuted with discussions arising out of my theory of light, that I blamed my own imprudence for parting with so substantial a blessing as my quiet, to run after a shadow.'

About this time a poor kinsman, Humphrey Newton, is admitted into the philosopher's rooms upon terms of domestic familiarity, but in what precise capacity no one knows. The occurrence is, however, one of great moment to the world; for the simple dependent contributes some very illustrative allusions to the habits and appearance of his benefactor, which almost enable a daguerreotype picture of his presence to be brought before the imagination. A man of sedate and gentle demeanour, with a meek, languid air, and a face pleasant and comely to look upon, although wearing habitually an expression of profound thought, only now and then enlivened by the flash of a quick, piercing eye, appears at the bidding of the humble and unconscious sketcher. The features of this face are gracious and calm; Master Humphrey, during a long experience, has never once seen them ruffled with a frown, and has only once seen them wrinkled with a laugh. The original of the portrait is at this time buried in abstruse speculations, and cannot find any leisure for gadding. He very rarely leaves his chamber, excepting to deliver the mathematical lecture which no one comes to hear, because it is in advance of every one's faculties of apprehension. Occasionally he receives two or three visitors, most probably self-invited, and steals off to find a bottle of wine for their entertainment; but there is very small chance of his returning, either with or without the wine, unless he is reminded to do so by some very decided monition from without. He walks much in his study, thus getting some muscular exercise without the expense of distracted attention and loss of time. He never does anything with his own hands in his little garden, but it is evidently a favourite spot; he cannot bear that a single weed should derange its trimness, and upon a rare occasion it occurs to him that he will take a turn among its fresh green leaves. By the time

he has got half-way down, however, he comes to a sudden pause, for a new idea looms upon him from some of its boughs, and he wheels about and runs up stairs, and falls to writing at his desk standing, lest the thought should escape him before it is recorded. He never sits down by his fire, in a comfortable, cozy way, excepting in the very coldest weather of winter-time; he even performs the necessary and unwelcome task of eating his meals on his feet—that is, when he remembers to do so at all. Not uncommonly, he is surprised, hours after the proper time, to learn that his dinner has been untouched; and he hastens to make amends to the neglected meal by cramming in three or four mouthfuls as rapidly as he can. Just as frequently his bed-maker saves him this trouble, and adroitly turns the untasted food into an attendant's perquisite. On public feast-days, it is but seemly that he should dine with his compeers in the hall; so, having been duly admonished of the hour, he saunters down through the quadrangle hall-wards, and some friend meets him on the way, with his hair uncombed, his shoes down at heels, his stockings untied, and, as a completion of his dinner-toilet, with his white surplice hanging from his shoulders. Once, when on a visit to Woolthorpe, it was his purpose to ride over from Grantham on horseback; and he led his horse by the bridle up a steep hill at the town's end. Arrived at the top of the hill, he turned to mount his steed; but, alas! there remained nothing to mount but the bridle which he carried in his hand. The horse had taken unfair advantage of its master's reverie, and had gone on before to announce his approach.

It is a curious fact that large brains are light sleepers, and require, on the whole, considerably less sleep than small ones. Newton scarcely ever went to bed until two or three o'clock in the morning—sometimes not until five or six o'clock; then he would sleep for from four to five hours, and after this short repose, arise quite refreshed, and prepared for renewed work. At spring-time, and at the fall of the leaf, he allowed himself a sort of six weeks' holiday; and signalled the period of recreation by sitting up altogether on alternate nights with Master Humphrey, in order that the fire of his chemical laboratory, in which he then worked, might never go out.

WANDERINGS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

SOME sixteen years ago, M. Ferrier, a French military gentleman, was selected, with other officers, to go to Persia, to drill and organise the Persian army. In this employment he appears to have earned distinction; but getting into trouble with the diplomatists at the Persian court, he was obliged at length to leave the country, by order of the government. His offence lay in the opposition which he manifested towards Russian interests, and he believes that his dismissal was owing mainly to the intrigues of the ambassador from St Petersburg. Returning to France in 1843, he sought for some redress through the French ministry; but M. Guizot, who was then in office, was pursuing a temporising policy, for the sake of peace and quietness; and accordingly M. Ferrier's complaints against the Persian government were put aside as matters too troublesome to be concerned with. After waiting a couple of years in France, in the hope of obtaining some assistance or employment from the state, and finding his expectations frustrated, the resolute soldier turned his steps once more towards the east, determined to seek his fortunes in Lahore, where several of his countrymen were serving under Runjeet Singh. On his way, he stayed a while in Bagdad, and then, on the 1st of April 1845, set out upon his journey through Persia and Afghanistan.

At this point his present narrative begins.* It is a history of highly interesting adventure, and containing animated descriptions of scenes and places in great part hitherto unknown to European readers. Beyond the Persian frontier, the traveller's route lay through territories so dangerous and difficult, that scarcely anybody has attempted to explore them. What befell M. Ferrier by the way, what perils he escaped, what troubles he encountered, what singular bed-fellows he got acquainted with, is all related with graphic minuteness and an entertaining pleasantry. No recent traveller has gone through such a range of diversified experiences, or has so vividly depicted the peculiar excitements attendant on adventure and discovery. We can furnish the reader with only an imperfect notion of the interest of the work in these pages; yet, dipping here and there, we shall be able to shew him that the book is one of more than ordinary attractions.

M. Ferrier's journey through the Persian kingdom is detailed with great spirit and liveliness; but as this part of the narrative is less striking than the later portions, we shall pass it over—simply stating that it was performed partly in connection with a trading caravan, and partly in company with a band of pilgrims proceeding to the holy city of Meshed, whither, at length, the author arrived on the 25th of May, nearly two months after setting out from Bagdad. At Meshed he engaged camels to carry him onwards to Herat, where he was hospitably received by Yar Mohamed Khan, the ruler of that city and neighbourhood, and a person also of some historical importance. Yar Mohamed was what is vulgarly styled a usurper and a regicide—he having mounted the throne by strangling his sovereign, and having furthermore distinguished himself by selling hundreds of his subjects into captivity to the Tarcomans. Nevertheless, as an oriental, his sublime mightiness was an able and efficient governor; and it is but justice towards him to make it known that his people and dependents, on the whole, enjoyed more security and prosperity than had previously been their lot under the dethroned dynasty. Though totally devoid of moral and political principle, and guilty of nearly all the crimes that can be conceived of an eastern despot, he was at the same time far from being the worst man of his order; for he was really a fellow of keen insight, prudence, and sagacity; did upon occasion many notable, approvable things, and would not in all likelihood have committed so much wickedness, had the course of his ambition been less beset with difficulties. Towards our traveller he conducted himself with courtesy and friendliness, and styles him, in a letter to another Afghan potentate, 'the sublime General Ferrier, a lord of the kingdom of France;' though at first he would not believe that he was anything but an Englishman who had come into the country charged with a secret diplomatic mission. Under this impression, on hearing of his approach, he had planned a public procession to go and meet him at some distance from Herat; an honour, however, which M. Ferrier evaded by hastening his journey, and so reaching the city before the time appointed for the ceremony. 'How,' says he, 'could I make a public entrance, hanging on one side of a camel, and my servant on the other, with one solitary baggage-camel in the rear?' The thing would have been ridiculous, and was not to be endured, if it could be possibly avoided. So, favoured by his Afghan disguise, he passed the town-gate in his litter without being recognised as

* *Caravan Journeys and Wanderings in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkestan, and Beloochistan; with Historical Notices of the Countries lying between Russia and India.* By J. P. Ferrier, formerly of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and late Adjutant-general of the Persian army. Translated from the Original Unpublished Manuscript. By Captain William Jesse. Edited by H. D. Seymour, M.P. London: Murray.

a European. The officer in command of the gate was not prepared to see the august visitor making his entrance in a manner so unostentatious; and on discovering that the individual on the camel was actually the man, he was astounded, and burst out into cries and lamentations. 'By Allah,' said he, 'I am a lost man; our most high and excellent vezir will cut my head off. My orders were to send a naib to a point two hours' distance from the town, to tell this European to defer his entrance until a happy constellation had been observed in the heavens, and after that I was to fire a gun to give notice of his approach. In my ignorance of this early arrival, I have done neither the one nor the other: I am a ruined man.'

M. Ferrier presented himself in his proper character of a Frenchman, but, as already hinted, he was not believed; and, singular to say, his supposed duplicity had the effect of raising him in the estimation of the Afghans. They accounted his story about going to take service in India as a clever invention, designed to conceal his secret purposes in connection with his presumed political mission. He was visited by sundry people of rank; and amongst others, by a number of learned doctors, the *Hakim bashes*, who hold a high position in the society of Herat. These doctors are a remarkable fraternity, and may be said to hold astonishing opinions. 'As in their eyes,' says our traveller, 'every European must be a doctor, the conversation never ceased running on the healing art, of which they considered themselves such distinguished professors: each, in turn, was anxious to give me a high opinion of his talent, and I was condemned to listen to a long and absurd display of Afghan erudition. They also brought with them some of their drugs, in order that I might give them some notion of the manner in which certain chemical preparations which they had received from British India should be employed, as they were ignorant of their effects. They had, they said, up to that time given these medicines in progressive doses, until they ascertained the cases to which they were applicable. How many of their unfortunate patients had been killed by this system, I dared not ask; but Mirza Asker filled up the blank by pulling from his pocket a bottle of the cyanate of mercury, requesting to know what devil of a salt this could be. "It has been of no use to me," he added, "for of one hundred patients that I have given it to, only one was cured—all the rest died." Having finished with medicine, alchemy had its turn, for some of these idiots spend all they possess in their search after the philosopher's stone. They are convinced that the English have found it, and attribute their riches to that discovery. They imagine all European gold coins are at the outset only bits of iron rubbed with a certain preparation, and then placed in devil's water from some well or spring, which metamorphoses it into gold. The doctors entreated me to initiate them into the secret; but I could only, in a most learned discourse, refer them to humanity, civilisation, political economy, and the rights of man, assuring them that it was only to these and our principles of order and justice that we owed the riches they envied us. This they would not believe, and from that moment conceived the highest opinion of my diplomatic talents, admiring the cleverness with which I eluded their pressing and repeated inquiries.'

Though hospitably entertained in the house of the Sertip Lal Mohamed, a confidential functionary of the vezir's, M. Ferrier was very closely watched, and was never left alone for a single moment. The Vezir Sahib, meanwhile, evinced no hurry to receive him, but, on the pretext of a feigned indisposition, delayed the reception from day to day. 'In thus adjourning it,' says M. Ferrier, 'he hoped before seeing me to learn the object of the political mission with which I was charged; and my obstinacy in persisting in my first statement only confirmed him in the belief

that I was a shrewd, cunning fellow, and *busior pookhte*—well cooked.' In spite of this, everything was done to make his semi-captivity as little irksome as possible. 'Sometimes,' says he, 'the Sertip passed the evening with me, and brought with him some *bayaderes*, whose dances were frequently prolonged into the night. These ladies were accompanied by a band of musicians, and the wine-cup circled with rapidity amongst them. The Sertip wished to include me in the libations, and seemed surprised that I shewed so little inclination for them; but wine I had always eschewed since I had resided in hot climates; and for the best reason—namely, to avoid the inevitable consequences—broken health. The Sertip could not understand this self-denial in a European, for I only quaffed two cups of his wine during my stay, and it was not particularly good. A Mussulman thinks more of strength than flavour, for his only idea in connection with drinking is to get drunk; the one has no attraction for him unless it is followed by the other, and, generally speaking, I found that the precepts of the Koran on this subject were very little attended to in these countries; if a man has the means of indulging himself, he gets drunk every night. No one may make wine at Herat; but the use of it is not altogether forbidden. To be positively authorised to drink it, a medical certificate is necessary; and this is readily given by the doctors, to whom the infirmity requiring this genial medicine is a source of revenue. The Sertip was the more chagrined at my abstemious habits, as he no doubt expected that I should in my cups let him into all my secrets: he tried this game several times without the least success, and I declined his pressing solicitations in so decided a manner, that he at length desisted.'

The author's account of his interview with Yar Mohamed, which took place after six or seven days' delay, is characteristic and amusing, but much too long for insertion here; suffice it to say, that with infinite difficulty the Vezir Sahib was at length convinced M. Ferrier had no object but that of journeying to Lahore, and granted him permission to pass through his territories. So away goes the traveller, by successive marches, through a varied and rudely settled country—over mountains and pasture-lands, and among the tent-dwellers in plains and deserts—onwards as fast as possible towards Balkh, the original capital of Persia, which he reached on the 4th of July, about a fortnight after his departure from Herat. This place was prosperous when Alexander of Macedon marched into it, and though since devastated by Genghis Khan and Timour, still flourishes 'the Mother of Cities,' in the midst of orchards and luxuriant meadows. Thence he goes onwards, across the Paropamisian range, among the Hazarah Tatars, in whose settlements no European had previously set his foot. Travelling in company with two persons of the tribe, however, M. Ferrier got on very well amongst them, though they are such arrant plunderers that no unaccompanied stranger could pass through their domains in safety. Some distance beyond Balkh, and not far from Cabool, the tribes of the country were found to be at war, a circumstance which hindered any further travelling in that direction. M. Ferrier was therefore induced to turn back by another road, hoping to make his way to Candahar. On this route he passed through the country of the Seherais, a tribe of Tatar pagans, of a patriarchal cast of habits. The name they bear (Seherai) signifies inhabitants of the plain, and they form a small republic, of which we have the following account:—'They pretend to have been settled there by Genghis Khan, and to have braved the efforts of every conqueror since the days of that grand exterminator. Having seen how difficult is the access to their country, I could believe it—the more so as their plain produces everything necessary for their maintenance. They are not obliged to have dealings with or in any way

concern themselves about their neighbours. The Scherai have a vague idea of Islamism, and sometimes swear by Ali and the Prophet; but these words are, I apprehend, mere relics of their former intercourse with the Mohammedan world, for as far as I could discover, their worship is real idolatry. Like the ancient Persians, they recognise a principle of good and a principle of evil, but under the modern names of Khoda and Shaitan, signifying God and devil—they are uncircumcised, never pray, and condemn no animal as unclean. Their habits are quite patriarchal: living far from the din of cities, and ignorant of their refinements as well as their superfluities, their manners have something wild and savage that at first sight shocks a stranger; but the feeling of dislike soon wears off, when you find that, ignorant as they are of all that in our eyes contributes to social wellbeing, they are not the less content, and are exempt from many tribulations which we inflict upon ourselves in search of happiness.

The chieftain of this tribe was Timour Beg, at whose court the author received some singular attentions. 'Timour Beg,' says he, 'welcomed me with the rough and simple cordiality natural to Tatars. He was between thirty-five and forty years of age, almost beardless, short, and built like a Hercules; a kind smile animated his countenance, and his features were far less ugly than those of Mongols in general. He received us with great cordiality, and immediately ordered a repast which would have sufficed for at least thirty persons; the beverage at this meal was a description of cider, with which he finished by intoxicating himself, and when we heard him snore, we requested permission to retire: this was granted, and the Scherai ladies, who had waited during dinner, conducted us to our apartments. Their subsequent attentions were remarkable, for they not only assisted at our toilet, but washed our feet, and, to my great astonishment, subsequently shampooed me from head to foot, and this too in the most free and easy manner possible. I did not think it necessary to refuse attentions which they thought it a duty to pay me under the sacred name of hospitality, for it has always been my habit to respect the customs of those countries through which I travel; but having a long ride before me on the morrow, I ventured to request the lady who had charge of me to moderate her exertions, and leave me to take some repose. Such is the invariable custom practised towards strangers at Div Hissar. At first I flattered myself that mine was an exceptional case, and intended as a special mark of honour on the part of Timour Beg; but I subsequently ascertained that my fellow-travellers, and even my servant, were equally the objects of the ladies' care, and that the chief's daughter is not exempt from the duties attendant upon this singular custom.'

M. Ferrier was not permitted to proceed peaceably to Candahar, but was stopped at Zerni, the capital of the district of Gour, and sent back to Herat. He subsequently endeavoured to reach India through Southern Afghanistan, by way of Girishk, a town not very distant from Candahar; which place, also, he eventually reached, and was there for a considerable time detained. He never got further eastwards than this city, but under various pretexts was passed on from place to place backwards, till he began to find his original undertaking hopeless. In this way, he traversed countries which he would not otherwise have seen, and his account of them forms one of the most interesting portions of his narrative. His adventures in these regions are truly marvellous. He witnessed the strangest illustrations of the primitive forms of social life; was several times imprisoned, and endured endless hardships; in some places he was most cruelly treated, and threatened with the acutest tortures; in others, entertained with the most seducing hospitalities.

All this in the recital gives his narrative an animated and continuous fascination, such as is paralleled only in the stories of the old celebrated travellers. There is also wrought in by the way an immense number of details highly valuable as contributions to geography and history. For instance, M. Ferrier describes the great river Helmund, which rises among the mountains near Cabool, and falls after a long circuitous course into the Lake Seistan; gives us a full account of the province of Seistan itself; and accompanies the statement with a good deal of information respecting the Turcomans, the Belooches, Usbeks, and other races, that occupy the region which spreads from the northern sea to the Chinese mountains. His sketches of these singular people are taken in all varieties of situation—in bazaars, coffee-houses, camps, travelling-caravans, walled villages, palaces, prisons, among shepherds, and soldiers, and gipsies, and banditti lurking to pillage strangers. A most varied, interesting narrative, supplying at once the latest and the best account that we possess of Central Asia.

Many of the races or tribes of people occupying this region have been hitherto almost entirely unknown to Europeans. The particulars given us respecting some of them are very striking and extraordinary—witness the following concerning the Belooches:—'The Belooches have the most singular ideas of a European that can well be conceived: struck with all they have heard and seen of their power, intelligence, and riches, they think not only that they can make gold, but also that their bodies, and everything belonging to or in contact with them, contains the precious metal. A few years before the date at which I am writing, Ali Khan received a visit at Sheikh Nassoor from an English doctor of the name of Forbes. He had been warned of the consequences which would assuredly befall him if he ventured within the clutches of this monster; but it was of no use—he was bent upon undertaking the journey, and paid the penalty of his curiosity with his life. Ali Khan murdered him in his sleep, and hung poor Forbes's body up in front of his own tent, which he ordered to be deluged with water during fifteen days consecutively. "You will see," he said to his people, "that this dog of an infidel will at last be transformed into good ducats." Finding, however, to his great amazement, that this proceeding did not produce the expected result, he thought he would boil the water with which the corpse had been washed; but with no better effect. It then occurred to him that the doctor, to play him a trick, had, before his death, made the gold pass from his body into the clothes and books which filled his trunks. Instead of burning these impurities, which had been his original intention, he had them cut and torn up into little bits, and mixed with the mortar destined to plaster his house. He had not yet had occasion to use it; but he informed us, as he related the details of this disgusting tragedy, that when he did, he expected to see his house covered with a layer of the precious metal. Nothing would ever have induced him to forego this belief; and he did not disguise from me that he would have been happy if he could have added my poor corpse to the mortar in question.'

A story like this, were it not given on such good authority, would seem incredible. We can well understand that M. Ferrier 'did not feel very comfortable' in the neighbourhood of such a monster; nor is it surprising that he should get away as soon as possible. He had sufficient opportunities, however, while travelling round Lake Seistan, to take note of the general habits and customs of the Belooche tribes; and, as the result of his observations, presents us with a curious succession of particulars; some of which may be extracted for the entertainment of our readers.

'The life led by these nomads is as savage as that of the wild beasts which, like them, rove through their deserts. To observe laws like other nations, to work,

to traffic, or obey a master, are things to them impossible. The most complete liberty of action is an imperious necessity of their nature; they are as proud of their crimes as we of our good actions; and the law of revenge is the only one which is invariably observed. When blood has been spilt, eternal hatred, which outlives generations in the families in which the deed was done, is the result; a reconciliation even cemented by a marriage, or the good offices and intervention of a *Peer*—holy man—will not be permanent; the *vendetta* alone is always remembered. To gratify this, they will track their enemy with a quiet perseverance perfectly wonderful, and either openly or secretly, frequently in ambush, or laying some snare, will cut his throat with a savage barbarity really inconceivable. Two Belooches of adverse tribes, or who have a family feud, and never saw one another, have a marvellous instinct in divining the fact; they scent it like a pointer: when they find themselves in presence of each other, there is no burst of furious outbreak, they regard one another for a moment in silence; but this calm is the sure forerunner of the death of one, and sometimes of both—I may say often. They are without pity, and if unarmed, they will tear each other like tigers with their nails, bite with their teeth, or strangle one another without making the least cry.

The Belooches call themselves Mussulmans, but they do not observe the precepts of the Koran; their religious ideas are a mixture of Islamism, Christianity, and idolatry—the whole seasoned with the grossest superstitions. The greater part are not circumcised, do not fast, do not pray, and, although acknowledging that Mohammed is a prophet, there is another they consider of much greater importance than he, and as second only to God, with whom they sometimes confound him. The power of this being is unlimited: he is called the *Peer Kisri*; and when they swear by him they may be trusted, but only then. The Belooches are ardent, impulsive, well formed, and nervous; . . . their features express astuteness and ferocity; they are insensible to privations, and support them and fatigue in the most admirable manner. . . . Their most extraordinary physical characteristic is the facility with which, camel-like, they can for so long a time go without drink in their burning country—a draught of water once in the twenty-four hours is sufficient for them, even on a journey; they have also a particular instinct for ascertaining the spot at which water is nearest the surface of the soil, and they rarely dig further than three feet without coming to it.

They march with a rapidity which it is impossible to conceive, and will walk faster than the best horse; there are instances amongst them of men who will tire out three horses, one after another, in this manner. They eat very little, and believe most implicitly in auguries; the cry of a wild beast, the sight of a serpent, a bird on the wing, a flight of birds, or a troop of wild asses which separate into two divisions, is sufficient to stop them short suddenly in the midst of their journey. They will never leave the place they are in before the sun, under which they were warned by this augury, has set and risen again; this delay is to allow Fate time to alter her intentions, should they happen to be adverse. When the opportunity for pillage arrives, their activity is amazing; their plans are undertaken and executed with great promptitude, and courage, and wonderful address; life is as nothing to them, and they will expose it for the least trifle; theft is an irresistible habit. They sit back to back on a dromedary, that they may have a perfect view in every direction, and on these beasts they will cover in a short time immense distances. They scour the southern roads of Afghanistan, and sometimes carry their raids into the centre of Persia; they kill all prisoners they cannot carry away with them, and will sometimes ride

a race of several score miles for the chance of getting a handkerchief or a rag—the smallest trifle, in short, will excite their avidity. They know so thoroughly how strong is their predilection for thieving, how inveterate the habit, that two friends, two brothers, ay, even a father and a son, travelling together, will take good care not to sleep close to one another. When the time for rest arrives, one will point out to the other a spot one hundred yards off where he had better sleep, and they both swear by *Peer Kisri* not to approach each other until the hour of departure. They have a remarkably quick sense of hearing, and the least noise or movement made by one will be sure to awake the other, who reminds him of the *Peer Kisri*. Sometimes a Belooche will kill another for his dress, the value of which may be about three shillings.

These singular people justify their passion for plunder by what seems to themselves a certain show of reasoning. 'Some thousand years ago,' they say, 'God divided the good things of this life in a manner far from equitable. Whether from forgetfulness, or at the instigation of some evil genii, the Belooches received nothing from him beyond an arid, ungrateful, and unproductive soil. This was unjust; and it is very natural,' they add, 'that we should try and take from others that which has been so unjustly withheld from ourselves.' As a sort of corollary to this argument, they cite the etymology of their name: *bé* in Persia signifies without; and *leuct* means naked, stripped; whence, by corruption of the latter word into *loucht*, the two united make *be-loucht*, which denotes that they came into the world naked, and without their share of the world's goods; and upon these grounds they consider themselves authorised to lay their hands upon anything that comes in their way. The reasoning, perhaps, is not extremely logical; but the Belooches may plead an imperfect education. They have no schools or colleges, and, what is worse, they are not so hospitable to strangers as other nomadic tribes, and, except under the protection of the *Peer Kisri*, it is dangerous to put any faith in them. 'They look upon Europeans as castaways, deriving their origin from genii, being in league with the devil, who has taught them how to make gold, and as having the power of the evil eye, and of being able to find hidden treasures: the ardour with which they see us examining and groping amongst old ruins confirms them in this last opinion.'

We might go on quoting curious and amusing passages from this book to almost any extent; but the restrictions of space remind us that we must come shortly to a close. The following singular legend in connection with a Persian fishpond being brief, may, however, be permitted to come in:—'I saw at Noovaran a large fishpond, so full, that it was impossible to plunge one's hand in without touching a fish. They were each about two pounds in weight, and so tame, that they came and fed out of my hand. Expressing my great surprise at their being in such numbers, a bystander accounted for it as follows: "You must know that once upon a time the inhabitants of Noovaran committed some great crime, when the genii turned them into fish; and," said he, "were any one to eat them, he would certainly die." When I told him that I fully intended to have one for dinner, great was his consternation; but he was somewhat pacified when I boasted that I was possessed of a talisman: nevertheless, when he saw me actually devour, with good appetite, one of the finny criminals, he retired, evidently with the firm conviction that I was a sorcerer, or something of the kind.'

M. Ferrier, having found his attempted road to India impracticable, by reason of the jealousy of the Afghan chieftains, was constrained to return by way of Herat to Persia. He reached Teheran on the 13th of January 1846, a little more than nine months after

the commencement of his wanderings. As Saul, the son of Kish, in looking after his father's asses, found a kingdom, so may M. Ferrier be said to have gained more by the accidents and hardships of his intercepted journey, than he would be likely to have got had his road been smooth before him; his perilous and diversified experiences forming matter for one of the most attractive volumes of travel that has appeared in modern times. The reader may be glad to hear that, notwithstanding obstacles, M. Ferrier, by some other route or line of passage, eventually reached India, and is now holding a government appointment at Pondicherry. It was there that Mr Danby Seymour, the editor of the volume, saw him about two years ago, and took charge of his manuscript, with a promise to try and get an English publisher to bring out a translation of it. Captain Jesse appears to have executed his undertaking admirably; and, every way considered, the work is one which may be pronounced thoroughly well deserving of all the popularity it can attain among English readers.

MY WATERING-PLACE.

My medical man is one of those benevolent persons who go about visiting in dark alleys and four-pair backs from pure motives of humanity, and as though fees were mere matters of tradition. It is true that I had known him in other days, and had prophesied his future advancement—things which he remembered with gratitude. It is a wise and prudent thing to make friends of young men, for really it is astonishing how some of them get on in a few years' time. There can be no harm in telling a young fellow that he is clever, and will one day become great. If he does not, he is flattered; and if he does, he never forgets you.

One day, at the beginning of the present summer—that is to say, at the end of June—my doctor was good enough to call upon me, and sit quiet while I detailed a list of symptoms. He had evidently been thinking of something else; but when I had done, he remarked generally, that what I wanted was not iron but air, and that I must go abroad for a month. I said that the thing was impossible, and intimated that my extensive engagements—

The doctor took up his hat impatiently, and I was glad to enter into a compromise for a fortnight at the sea-side. I remembered to have heard that at Sandfield, a watering-place somewhere near the Nore, I should find a pretty neighbourhood and unsophisticated landladies.

That same evening I placed myself at 6-35 in a second-class carriage of a train for Sandfield, and occupied myself in brushing away the cobwebs which are apt to accumulate in working-men's brains at that hour in the evening. At length the engine gave a great snort, and drew us from under the glass roof out among the chimney-pots. It must be confessed that London has not a pleasant appearance from the railway point of view. We passed miles of houses which seemed to have been dropped there in a heap, and the narrow passages which served for streets hollowed out among them afterwards. We saw the back parts of these houses, and something of the actual life of the inhabitants, as distinguished from the false show with which the fronts made effort to deceive the passer-by. Sometimes a broken mug appeared at a window, sometimes a child's head, and both equally dirty and unwholesome looking. They say that London smoke is passing away, and that not only in the Temple gardens, but also in Wapping and Whitechapel, smuts will soon cease to float in the cerulean air. I only hope I may live to see it. Meanwhile, he who travels among the tiles of London, even though at railway speed, can hardly fail to see what an Augean task lies before

the Sanitary Commissioners, and wonder at the apathy with which the people of the Far West and golden East permit the existence of so much misery near them.

Calling to mind former experiences in second-class carriages, I had secured to myself a corner, where I sat in profound silence according to the custom of my country. The carriage was full, and near to me sat a stout sleepy-looking man, evidently a farmer, and with that indescribable complexion, between purple and chocolate colour, which sometimes results from hard work and beer taken habitually.

'Master,' said he to me, 'will you let my little girl sit on your knee? She wants to see out of window?'

I said I should be very happy, if the little girl herself would like it; and she presently answered in the affirmative. Fortunately she had no point of resemblance to her father, but, on the contrary, was a delicate little thing, weighing nothing to speak of. She entertained me with general conversation, and never suffered any object of interest to escape my attention. 'On a railway, solitude is impossible,' I said to myself, as I patted her on the head; 'but one might almost as well be married as go through this sort of thing.' Ultimately we arrived where she was to get out, and I then requested her to give me a kiss. Her father, who appeared to be a selfish old person, could not understand this proceeding; however I got the kiss, and paid no attention to his remark on the subject. She did not cry—that was some comfort.

We now approached our destination, and the only person remaining in the carriage with me was a fat, rather asthmatic gentleman, who I learnt was on his way to Sandfield as well as myself. Choosing a moment when the engine was not whistling—engines whistle more on this line of railway than any other I know of—I entered into conversation with this gentleman. Two hours' silent contemplation of a fellow-creature have a tendency to overcome one's reserve, and he was good enough to answer me. Did he know Sandfield? Well, now, he couldn't say he did, but he had lived there about a week. Was it a nice place? Well, yes, for those that liked it; couldn't say he did; perhaps he might, if he had gone there for pleasure, which he didn't. Was it a cheap place? Ha, ha, ha! not exactly.

Addressing my companion with more earnestness and some anxiety, I requested him to explain himself. He did so; and the conclusion to be arrived at from his statements was, that the lodging-houses were dear, but that the hotels were dreadful, and that, in fact, it was just like any other watering-place. 'Is there no such thing as a quiet, primitive sort of inn?' I inquired. 'I am a moderate man—clean sheets and a conscientious landlord are all I want.'

My friend had tried to find such an inn, but quite without success. He entertained me with an account of a luncheon he had eaten at the Premier Hotel. He called it luncheon; the waiter persisted in describing it as a dinner. 'What were the odds?' he asked himself after an altercation on the subject; but when he looked in the bill he found them: dinner, 4s.; etceteras, 1s.; waiter, what you please, sir. He declared to me that he had eaten nothing but a slice of beef and bread, and that the etceteras were things of which he was wholly innocent.

At this moment the train stopped at Cawthorne, a village three miles from Sandfield. Here at least, thought I, I can stay for a week without being ruined. I got out of the carriage, wished my friend good-night, and committed my bag to the charge of a porter, who requested to know where I was going to put up. I examined his face by the lantern, and perceived that it was intelligent, so I took his advice about the matter. I had no reason to regret doing so; for he conducted me to an old-fashioned inn, whose sign of the Cat and

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Triangles was by no means suggestive of the quiet to be enjoyed within.

On the way thither, we passed the stall of a travelling hawker, who was selling his goods by auction. In country places, where public amusements are scarce, the people are glad of any pretence to get up a crowd. Joe has an opportunity of saying something privately to Mary, being perhaps the first time he has been able to explain his intentions to the young woman. I saw him at it, and presently a similar scene took place on the other side of me. There was a good deal of laughing going on generally, and half the crowd seemed to be occupied with amusing themselves. Nevertheless, the hawker appeared to sell his goods very easily. He used plenty of words, flavoured with that remarkable tone which appears to be peculiar to persons in his line of business. Sometimes he stated that he should be driven to turn Cheap John, if trade did not improve; and sometimes he would try to enhance the value of an article by declaring that 'his uncle' would give more than that for it. That relative, however, did not appear, and I observed that the article always passed into the hands of strangers. It was curious to notice some object of vertu originally put up at ten shillings, and soon afterwards knocked down for twopence half-penny; but such instances were by no means uncommon.

Arrived at my inn, I partook with great contentment of a meal consisting of indifferent tea, excellent butter, fresh eggs, a snowy table-cloth, a vase of magnificent flowers, and a landscape which stretched before the window. These latter items were not edible, it is true; but it is certain, nevertheless, that they formed part of the entertainment. In another room, to which I afterwards adjourned, was a worthy bricklayer and his wife, who had come to pay a friendly visit to the landlady; and with them I had some edifying and entertaining conversation on smoking, chimney ornaments, and marriage.

My landlady lighted me to my room, according to the old custom. The accommodation was not splendid, but the exquisite neatness of the room invited to slumber; songs and water, when applied to sheets, having a soporific influence, with or without lavender.

A fortnight passed, during which my first impressions of Cawthorne were confirmed day by day. I bathed where I pleased; I dined not luxuriously, but reasonably; I found society, which, if not refined, was at least hearty and honest; and I can say emphatically that when I parted from my landlord, we retained our mutual good opinion. On reflection, I do not find that I had more than one cause of complaint. Cawthorne is almost exclusively inhabited by fishermen, which appeared to be a principal reason why no fish could be obtained there. Directly the boats came in, their cargoes were packed off to London. I had a vivid recollection of some herrings I had tasted at Ballachulish—and which, I am ready to maintain, were equal to any in Loch Fyne—I knew that almost any fish eats well if cooked immediately after being caught, and I requested that the boats might be waylaid, and fish forcibly purchased therefrom. These instructions were acted upon; but the result was only a few small plaice, the only instance in which the London fishmongers could be forced to give place to other purchasers.

The badness of watering-place accommodation is proverbial, and its costliness equally so. There can be no objection to a person paying highly for taking sea-air in fashionable society, if he chooses to do so, but it is matter for grumbling to people of humbler tastes that the fashion which they do not court, should be charged so severely in the bill. I suppose that few persons, sitting down to a dear and scanty watering-place dinner, will deny the justice of the proverb, that it is the company and not the charge that makes the

feast. What is a watering-place? I asked myself, as I took my second-class ticket homewards with new health and spirits. Why should Robinson pinch himself at home, for the purpose of taking his wife and family for a month to expensive lodgings at a fashionable place on the coast, when there are plenty of other places on the coast, not fashionable, equally healthy, and very considerably cheaper?

Lest it should be supposed that my opinion of Sandfield is founded on the mere word of a stranger, I may as well mention that I passed a day and a night in that place to the entire satisfaction of any doubts I might have had on the subject, and at the same time to the damage of my purse. It is true, that I got into fashionable company, but really that was not the purpose for which I went out of town. What were the pier and the bathing-machines, and the umbrella-hats and the Rotunda, and the perambulators and the library to me, that they should affect the price of my shrimps and the comfort of my lodgings? The thing really did not admit of argument, I said to myself; and I returned with great contentment to the unsophisticated neighbourhood of the Cat and Triangles.

BIRDS AT NEST-TIME.

ON the pretty little branch of the Great Western line that runs from Maidenhead to Wycombe, crossing the Thames a little above Cookham, a remarkable instance of the tameness of the skylark at nest-time occurred this year. Close to this line of rail, on which at least ten trains were passing and repassing each day, a pair of skylarks—birds so wild in their usual nature—built their nest and hatched their young ones. The nest was built in a tuft of short grass, not two feet from the tram. After the young ones were partly fledged, one of the attendants on the line, fearing for their safety, removed the nest and the young family to an open cage, where the old ones came regularly to feed them; so that, perhaps, they will have to pay for their parents' temerity by passing their little futures in bondage—not a consummation to be wished, for one cannot hear a lark singing in his cage but he seems yearning for his native fields of air.

Strange as this confidence on the part of the lark may appear in choosing a spot for rearing its young so close to the roar of the engine, the rush of the train, the forty-woman power shriek of the whistle, and not secure from occasional cinders, it is not wholly without parallel in the same bird, though not perhaps to the same degree. I recollect, years ago, finding on a dusty high road, between two market-towns in the east of England, where vehicles of all descriptions were constantly passing, on a little strip of low grass, not above a foot wide, which ran at intervals between the roadway and the footpath, another skylark's nest with its little group of brown eggs in it. I certainly should not have discovered it had I not stepped at that point from the road to the path, when I put up the old bird almost with my foot. I marked the place by sticking a branch into the bank opposite, and guided by this, looked at it again when I passed by two or three days afterwards. At that time, they were still there; but I do not know anything of their after-fate. The precaution of marking the nest was quite requisite; for one thing that no doubt gives confidence to the lark tribe as to placing their nests, is the remarkable way in which these escape the eye, even when you know all but their exact position. Indeed, they are usually discovered only by the flight of the old bird. I have not unfrequently found a lark's nest on the ground in an open grassfield, the usual place of building, and marked it by placing a stick upright at about a couple of yards' distance, and noting its exact relation to the nest. On going again, I have

actually, even with this guide, looked for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour all about the grass, certainly not more than a yard or two square, where my eye must have frequently passed over it, without observing the nest, and then I have discovered it only at the moment when I had come to the conclusion that the stick must have been moved from its place.

That this could occur, without dulness of sight on my part, will hardly be realised by those not acquainted with such country matters; nevertheless, I believe my vision is as keen as most people's, and I was thought among my school-fellows, when a boy, to have a quick eye for a nest. The reason, of course, for the domestic arrangements of the lark so escaping observation, is, that they offer so little in form, colour, or shadow different from the surrounding herbage, which at the nesting-time of year has generally a brown tinge. The nest is on the plain sward, with no high tuft or shrub indicating the probability of its presence. It is of grass, and shallow, throwing but little shadow, and the eggs are brown like haystalks; and when the old bird is on, unless she betrays her fear by movement, which she rarely does unless actually almost put up by the foot, it is still more difficult to discover than under other circumstances; for she so completely fills up the hollow, and tucks her feathers so snugly round the margin of her children's cradle, that there is no inequality to arrest the eye.

The skylark, however, is by no means the only bird that at nest-time shews a confidence approaching to audacity. There is no shyer bird than the nightingale; so much so, that doubtless many who have been delighted by its song in the woods have never seen it but in a cage. I call to mind, however, at Sandwich, on the coast of Kent, a nightingale building in a low shrub, close to a French window, in the front of a gentleman's house (I mean one of those windows that open like doors, which this did on the lawn); and through this a merry family of little boys and girls were often running in and out at high romps, without disturbing in the least the feathered family close by. The children, however, were very good, and never peeped into the bush. They were proud of their neighbours, and tenacious of their seclusion; and whenever the slender and elegant but sober-coloured figure of one of the parents was seen emerging from or entering the shrub, it produced a hush among the little prattlers, who would indicate its presence only by silent gestures. The country around was open, and afforded little harbour for so recluse a bird; and perhaps the low shrubberies about this house assimilated more with the underwood which is so much the haunt of this songster, than most of the spots in the neighbourhood. Whether this was the sole cause of this pair of nightingales relinquishing their usual reserve and habits of concealment, I cannot say.

The best known of the swallow tribe and the missel or misseltoe thrush are shy birds; but at nest-time they not only affect the neighbourhood of man, but choose such places for building as are easily detected—the former ensconcing their bracket-like clay habitations in chimneys or under eaves, and the latter placing their nests openly, often not higher than a man can reach, in the crotch of some stout tree, and frequently in the least concealed part of a garden; whence, however, with shrill discordant cries, they seek to drive away any intruder, feathered or otherwise. These birds, however, do not always confine themselves to cries, but have recourse to stronger measures, for which their hard beaks are well adapted. A pair having built in an apple-tree, under some high trees occupied by rooks, a young flapper of the latter fell a victim to his having, in evil hour, fluttered down to the tree below, ignorant of the jealous tempers of its occupants. I heard the threatening cries of onset, and saw the two parent birds rushing on wing through

the branches by him, but had no idea that they would do more than drive him away. The result, however, was fatal, for I found the poor young black gentleman lying 'stiff and stark' under the tree a few hours after.

THE PERVIOUS HEEL.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

I KNOW a scent which to me brings restoring freshness, yet That floating fragrance on its wings a seal of pain hath set, For with it sickness mars the health of one I value well; Thus, what attracts *me* more than wealth, *another* may repel.

The boisterous wind, that stirs your blood with wholesome life, may be

A cause of pain—misunderstood—to others, as to me : Our human nerves act not alike, our human hopes and fears

A wild and different music strike, to waken smiles or tears,

What strong man, then, should mock the weak ? Be sure the strongest hath

A tender part, where pain may wreak the tortures of its wrath !

Antagonisms through nature run, and 'tis enough to know That health may fill the gale for one which lays another low !

There may be tears for all who weep, but not for all who die ;

We need not grieve for that last sleep which breaks and wakes on high ;

But should poor nature then demand a burst of human grief,

Why should we cruelly withstand the storm that gives relief ?

Still, while we feel our own sad wants, and sympathise with those

Whose path a different terror haunts, whose frame new weakness shews,

Let us take comfort, giving it; and with a brother's arm

Support the faint who are not fit to bear their share of harm !

HANDEL OUT OF TUNE.

This celebrated composer, though of a very robust and uncouth appearance, yet had such a remarkable irritability of nerves, that he could not bear to hear the tuning of instruments, and therefore this was always done before Handel arrived. A musical wag, who knew how to extract some mirth from his irascibility of temper, stole into the orchestra on a night when the late Prince of Wales was to be present at the performance of a new oratorio, and *untuned* all the instruments, some half a note, others a whole note lower than the organ. As soon as the prince arrived, Handel gave the signal of beginning *con spirito*; but such was the horrible discord, that the enraged musician started up from his seat, and having overturned a *double-bass* which stood in his way, he seized a kettle-drum, which he threw with such violence at the head of the leader of the band, that he lost his full-bottomed wig by the effort. Without waiting to replace it, he advanced *bearded* to the front of the orchestra, breathing vengeance, but so much choked with passion, that utterance was denied him. In this ridiculous attitude, he stood staring and stamping for some moments amidst a convulsion of laughter; nor could he be prevailed upon to resume his seat, till the prince went personally to appease his wrath, which he with great difficulty accomplished.—*Political Magazine*, 1786.

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